

47 Rotherfield Way
Emmer Green

Report for:
Mr & Mrs P Williams
47 Rotherfield Way
Emmer Green
Reading
RG4 8PJ

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with your instructions, AA Environmental Limited (AAe) carried out a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at the above site on Monday 3 August 2026. The purpose of the survey was to assess the presence or likely absence of bats utilising the house and provide appropriate mitigation measures, as necessary. A series of photographs has been attached for reference.

The proposals are for a two-storey side extension and loft conversion requiring the removal of a single-storey extension. The vast majority of the garden will remain unaffected by the works.

LEGISLATION

Currently there are 17 species of bat known to breed in the UK. All species and their roosts are protected under Regulation 41 of *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)*. As a signatory to the *Bonn Convention (Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe)* the UK is also required to protect their habitats. This legislation makes it illegal to kill, injure, capture or disturb bats or to obstruct access to, damage or destroy bat roosts and protection from damage or disturbance of important feeding areas. Under the law, a roost is any structure or place used for shelter or protection.

METHODOLOGY

Baseline Data

As certain baseline data is now readily available on the internet, the Multi-agency website (www.magic.defra.gov.uk) was consulted to determine whether any part of the site or nearby habitats have been statutorily or otherwise designated and whether any European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs) for bats have been granted within 1 km of the site. In addition, a review of Google Earth's satellite imagery (http://www.google.co.uk/intl/en_uk/earth/index.html) was completed to determine past land uses of the site and surrounding land.

Walk-over Site Survey

A visual survey of the site was completed to record any evidence of bats or features that could provide potential roosting opportunities following the guidelines provided by the Bat Conservation Trust¹ and by an experienced and licensed ecologist². A thorough internal and external examination of the existing buildings was carried out, with any access points inspected for evidence of bats. All internal roof voids/spaces, where present, were accessed to check for any evidence of bats, with the buildings assessed in accordance with the following criteria:

- **None** – No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).
- **Negligible** – No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.

¹ Collins, J. (ed) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

² The lead surveyor was Julian Thorner MSc (Hons) MCIEEM – 2025-86138-CL18-BAT.

- **Low** - A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats).
- **Moderate** - A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
- **High** - A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.

In addition, a careful inspection of any trees in the vicinity of the works was carried out to identify those features that are important for roosting bats. Surveying trees presents particular problems at any time of the year as bats will use a wide variety of roost sites in cavities, splits, cracks, knotholes and under loose bark, many of which are not easily detected from the ground. Each tree was assessed in accordance with the following criteria:

- **NONE** – Either no Potential Roosting Features (PRF's) in the tree or highly unlikely to be any.
- **FAR** – Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree.
- **PRF** – A tree with at least one PRF present.

The surrounding habitat was also surveyed to identify any important features such as mature trees with suitable features for roosting bats and any established lines of vegetation that might provide important flightlines.

Evidence of bats is usually detected by any one or more of the following signs:

- the presence of bat droppings, which tend to accumulate under established roost sites or at roost entrances;
- the accumulation of large numbers of moth wings, which have been discarded by feeding bats;
- areas of staining by urine or from fur rubbing; and
- the presence of bats themselves or their corpses.

The visual survey was facilitated by the use of binoculars, ladders, powerful torches (1M candlepower) and a Ridgid Micro CA-350 Inspection Camera endoscope. A heterodyne bat detector was also utilised during the survey to record any bat calls.

Other Wildlife

In accordance with good practice, the site was checked for any evidence of other protected species or species of particular note.

RESULTS

Baseline Data

According to the Multi-agency website, there are no statutory designated ecological sites located on or adjacent to the site. The nearest designated site is Clayfield Copse Local Nature Reserve (LNR), located approximately 1.27 km to the north-east and the site lies within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone³. There are no

³ The proposals are for an extension onto the existing property; the nature of the development does not meet any criteria which would trigger further consultation with Natural England (available at:

Habitats of Principal Importance (HPIs) located on or adjacent to the site. The nearest Habitat of Principal Importance (HPI) was an area of Deciduous Woodland located approximately 40 m to the south-south-east of the site.

According to the Multi-agency website, there were four bat licences granted within 1 km of the site. The closest of which was for the destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) (reference: 2018-35917-EPS-MIT), located approximately 0.81 km to the north-north-west of the site.

Google Earth Imagery shows that the site has remained unchanged since at least 2005.

Site Description (Photographs 1 - 4)

The site is located in Emmer Green, Reading and centred at National Grid Reference: SU 714759. The site comprised the existing semi-detached house and associated garden. The site is bordered by Rotherfield Way to the south and residential properties with associated gardens to all other sides.

The two-storey masonry constructed semi-detached house had a pitched, engineered tiled roof that was in good condition. There was a single chimney stack with lead flashing at its base. There was a single-storey extension to the side, with a flat solid concrete roof. The uPVC soffits/fascias were in good condition and well-sealed with mastic/silicone. Internally there was a single roof space/attic that was lined with a bitumen based felt, insulated with mineral wool and in a cobwebbed condition.

The garden was dominated by lawns with some boundary vegetation also present. There were two immature ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) trees located close to house (one to the front and one to the rear).

Bats

No evidence of bats was recorded during the careful internal and external inspection of the house, which was well-maintained, with no potential access gaps for bats recorded. The roof tiles and lead flashing were closely fitted and the soffits/fascia well-sealed. Internally the roof space/attic was fully accessed and not complex allowing a thorough inspection to be completed and found to be in cobwebbed condition. Overall the house was assessed to provide **negligible** roosting opportunities for bats.

The two small ash trees were assessed to be under the category **NONE** with no PRF's recorded. The site being a small residential plot provided limited foraging opportunities for bats.

Other Wildlife

Apart from a few common species of birds, either recorded on the site or flying overhead, no other species of any note were recorded.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposals are for a two-storey side extension and loft conversion requiring the removal of a single-storey extension. The vast majority of the garden will remain unaffected by the works. There are no habitats of international, national, county or local importance that would be directly affected by the proposals. The site is of overall low ecological value, with the species recorded described as common or abundant and are found in similar places across much of Britain, with no evidence of bats or other protected species recorded.

Although there are considered to be no over-riding ecological constraints to the minor proposals, a series of generic mitigation measures, as detailed below, should be implemented to reduce any impact the development proposals may have on local wildlife. There is also an opportunity to implement some

enhancement measures to increase the nature conservation value of the site in the long term in accordance with Government guidance as set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024⁴.

A thorough examination of the existing house was completed, with all potential access points and/or roosting opportunities fully inspected for evidence of bats. Although no evidence of bats was recorded, with the house assessed to provide **negligible** roosting opportunities and no further surveys are considered necessary, in accordance with best practice all site operatives should be given a toolbox talk so that they are fully aware of current legislation protecting bats and their roosts (copy has been attached at Appendix A). In the unlikely event of any bats being encountered on the site, then works should stop immediately and Natural England or AAe contacted so that appropriate advice can be provided (**N.B. a European Protected Species Licence may then be required to permit the works to continue**).

It should be noted that all species of wild bird and their nests are protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)*. Although no bird nesting material was recorded during the survey with very limited areas of potential nesting habitat to be removed/affected, a check should be carried out prior to any works to ensure there are no active nests present.

In order to protect any nearby established vegetation, suitable fencing may be required at certain locations to reduce the possibility of any damage that could be caused during the works. To minimise accidental damage, any overhanging branches should be pruned back to suitable live growth points. All works should be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced specialist contractor and should conform to current industry best practice, i.e. BS 3998: 2010 '*Tree Work - Recommendations*'. The retention and protection of the existing vegetation will help to maintain existing commuting/foraging routes currently utilised by local wildlife.

Although the works are restricted with limited opportunities to implement any enhancement measures, a series of wildlife boxes (such as bat and bird boxes) could be installed onto the site to provide enhanced roosting and nesting opportunities.

The effects of lighting on plants and animals are difficult to assess, but it is thought that lighting can adversely affect invertebrates, birds and bats. As the site already experiences some lighting from on-site sources there should be no change in current light levels from the proposed works.

Overall, the findings of this detailed visual survey would indicate that there are no ecological constraints to the proposals that would preclude planning permission being granted. A range of standard controls are available and deliverable to ensure that there would be no adverse impact on bats and local wildlife with a series of controls to be implemented to avoid contravention of current legislation.

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⁴ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2024). *National Planning Policy Framework*. London.

Photograph Record Sheet



Photograph 1: Showing the rear elevation of the house.



Photograph 2: Showing the front elevation of the house.



Photograph 3: Showing the roof which was in good condition and well-sealed.



Photograph 4: Showing the cobwebbed roof space.

Rev.	Details		Drawn Chkd.	Date
Project 47 Rotherfield Way Emmer Green				
Title Photograph Record Sheet				
			AA Environmental Ltd Units 4-8 Cholswell Court Shippon Abingdon Oxon OX13 6HX T:(01235) 536042 F:(01235) 523849 info@aae-ltd.co.uk www.aae-ltd.co.uk	
Scale NTS	Date 05.08.26	Drawn JDT	Chkd. ARB	Drg. No. 263253/01 Rev.

Appendix A
Toolbox Talk (Bats)

TOOLBOX TALK:

BATS

Did you know?

- Bats are the world's only flying mammal.
- There are 17 species of bat known to be breeding in the UK, 6 of which are endangered or rare and 6 are classed as vulnerable.
- Bats can be found across the country in urban and rural locations.
- They are often sighted at dusk as they leave their roost, flying around hedgerows, woodland and waterbodies, feeding on insects.
- Throughout the year bats will often change their roost, depending upon the season.
- Usually a pregnant female will only have one baby a year, this makes colonies vulnerable to population decline.
- During the winter bats hibernate and may not wake up, even if disturbed. Therefore it's important not to work on sites with bats during these months.
- Bats may not use the same roost throughout the year, however they are legally protected with or without a bat occupying them.

Identification

- You may find bats in any number of places, they tend to prefer dark, quiet spots with good shelter, such as holes and cracks in trees, roofs and walls of buildings, under bridges, old tunnels and in caves.
- Signs of bat presence include discarded moth wings, staining around crevices and small mouse-like droppings which crumble easily.

Legislation

- All bats and their roosts are protected by UK and European Law. This makes it **illegal to kill, injure, capture or disturb bats** or obstruct access to, damage or destroy their roosts and protects important feeding areas from damage or disturbance.
- Under law, a roost is any structure or place used for shelter or protection.

Site Controls

- There is always a **risk** that bats, as they move between different roost sites and occupy new roosts, could be encountered during site works.
- **If any bats are encountered during works the following controls must be applied to avoid breaking the law:**
 1. If bats are discovered/suspected works must stop **immediately** with any bat left in-situ and AAe immediately contacted (contact details above).
 2. If any injured bats are found during the works AAe would care for them and where possible be released in the same location once recovered.
 3. During works staff must wear gloves in case of accidental contact with bats.
 4. Any roof tiles will be lifted straight up, rather than being rolled over, minimising the risk of harming bats which may be sheltering underneath.
 5. Areas must be fully checked for any bats or their evidence prior to filling any gaps and repointing any brickwork.
 6. Any lighting must be installed must avoid illuminating vegetation and or bat boxes/access points.

These controls have been put in place to protect all site operatives from breaking the law. You're not expected to be able to identify bats or their presence so remember, **if in doubt shout and contact the relevant person.**

Key Contacts

AA Environmental Ltd, Units 4-8 Cholswell Court, Shippon, Oxfordshire, OX13 6HX

Tel: 01235 536042



Brown long-eared bat.



Lesser horseshoe bat in rail tunnel.



Common pipistrelle bat.